

Message Text

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ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07
LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 OMB-01 TRSE-00 IGA-02 /090 W
----- 067841 /41

R 201230Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY COTONOU
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9161
INFO AMEMBASSY LOME

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DEPT PASS AID/W

LOME FOR AALC REPRESENTATIVE

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAID, ELAB, US, DM, XA
SUBJ: BENIN REQUEST FOR CONTRIBUTION TO PAN-AFRICAN COOPERATIVE
TRAINING CENTER

REF: COTONOU 773 (NOTAL)

1. GOVERNMENT OF PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BENIN (GPRB) MINISTER OF
PUBLIC WORKS AND LABOR ADOLPHE BIAOU CALLED IN CHARGE DEC 14 TO
REQUEST US ASSISTANCE IN CONSTRUCTING A THREE-BUILDING COMPLEX
IN COTONOU TO SERVE AS THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE PAN AFRICAN
COOPERATIVE TRAINING CENTER. BIAOU EXPLAINED THAT AT SECOND PAN
AFRICAN COOPERATIVE CONFERENCE HELD IN BENIN MARCH 11-12, 1976,
BENIN WAS DESIGNATED SEAT OF ORGANIZATION ON CONDITION THAT IT
COULD BUILD A SUITABLE HEADQUARTERS WITHIN TWO YEARS. SINCE
BENIN WAS ANXIOUS NOT TO LOSE THE OPPORTUNITY TO HOST CENTER,
BISOU SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED TO CANVASS AS MANY
POTENTIAL DONORS AS POSSIBLE FOR ANY FORM OF ASSISTANCE.

2. BIAOU CANDIDLY DESCRIBED THE BUILDING PROJECT AS "UN PEU
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COLOSSAL." SAYING THAT IT WOULD COST CFA 465,635,246, OR
\$1,876,396 AT CURRENT EXCHANGE RATES. IN ADDITION, GPRB WAS
SEEKING AN "EXCEPTIONAL" GRANT OF CFA 7,000,000 TO COVER
DEFICIT INCURRED THROUGH RENTAL OF OFFICE SPACE IN 1976, AND
CFA 17,496,000 TO PROVIDE FOR A FIVE-MONTH TRAINING SESSION
FOR 32 PARTICIPANTS AND A ONE-MONTH SEMINAR, FOR SAME NUMBER.

3. CHARGE TOLD BISOU THAT HE NOT FULLY BRIEFED ON PAST HISTORY OF PROJECT AND THUS COULD MAKE NO RESPONSE AT THIS TIME. BIAOU SAID THAT HE WOULD APPRECIATE ANY EFFORT WHICH COULD BE MADE.

4. COMMENT: WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT'S COMMUNICATING THIS INFORMATION TO AFRO-AMERICAN LABOR CENTER (AALC) WHICH HAS BEEN ENTITY LINKED WITH PAN AFRICAN COOPERATIVE TRAINING CENTER PROJECT. BUILDING COMPLEX OF THIS MAGNITUDE FOR PROGRAM THAT HAS BEEN CHARACTERIZED AS ONLY "MILDLY SUCCESSFUL" (REFTEL) STRIKES US AS HIGHLY UNREALISTIC, BUT WHERE PRESTIGE PROJECTS ARE CONCERNED, THE GPRB HAS BEEN KNOWN TO PRESS AHEAD ON ITS OWN (E.G. THE FOUR MILLION DOLLAR HALL DES SPORTS). WE WILL CONSULT PRIVATELY WITH OTHER EMBASSIES HERE TO DETERMINE WHO HAS BEEN APPROACHED AND WHAT REACTION HAS BEEN.

5. COMPLETE MEMCON BEING POUCHED TO AF/W.
THOMPSON

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, CONSTRUCTION, BUILDINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976COTONO01999
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760466-1205
From: COTONOU
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761229/aaaaayti.tel
Line Count: 80
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AID
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 COTONOU 773
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 JUN 2004 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <05 OCT 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BENIN REQUEST FOR CONTRIBUTION TO PAN-AFRICAN COOPERATIVE TRAINING CENTER
TAGS: EAID, ELAB, US, DM, XA
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006